



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2012

No. 45

House of Representatives

The House met at 4 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Almighty God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day. We give You thanks for the beauty of this city as the blossoms of spring burst forth with the promise of hope.

May the minds and hearts of the Members of this people's House be similarly filled with beauty and hope as they return to the important work to be done. It is difficult and often contentious work. Bless them with peace, patience, and with good will.

Bless us this day and every day, and may all that is done within these hallowed Halls this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

VETERANS IN SOUTH LOUISIANA DESERVE BETTER

(Mr. BOUSTANY asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, last week, I was furious to learn veterans in south Louisiana must wait even longer to receive an upgrade to promised veterans' clinical services in Lafayette and Lake Charles due to bureaucratic incompetence—or something worse. After years of hard work, effort, and patience, the VA is pressing the reset button on these projects. This is unacceptable. I refuse to stand by and allow Washington to give false assurances of hope to those who fought so bravely for our country.

As the Lake Charles American Press stated:

It took the United States and its Allies only 45 months to defeat the Axis powers of Germany, Japan, and Italy in World War II. It's obscene that 46 months after the VA announced it would open a clinic in Lake Charles, veterans are still waiting for ground to be broken.

Making broken promises like these to our Nation's veterans is shameful. I will continue to lead the fight to protect our veterans against the broken promises of the VA in Washington. I look forward to bringing specific concerns to Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki's attention regarding this absurd incompetence.

IT'S TIME TO ACCELERATE OUR WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN. Madam Speaker, the time to accelerate our withdrawal from Afghanistan has arrived. Afghanistan has very little to do with the security of most Americans. Osama bin Laden is dead, and al Qaeda is decimated. In fact, there may be 50, at the most, al Qaeda between Afghanistan and Paki-

stan. There are more in other parts of the world. But the reality is that the Afghans don't want people from Saudi Arabia or Egypt or Yemen or wherever telling them what to do. But neither do they want Americans telling them how to live their lives.

But while our security is not threatened, we owe a responsibility to our brave young men and women in uniform because their security is threatened, largely through reasons that were wholly out of their control. They're waging a valiant fight to do what we have asked them to do, but we have a responsibility to make sure that no lives are lost in vain. It's time to accelerate our withdrawal from Afghanistan.

REPEAL OBAMACARE IN WHOLE OR IN PART

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, this Friday marks the second anniversary of ObamaCare.

Since that day 2 years ago, we've seen multiple reports and heard firsthand the disastrous effects of the law that allowed the Federal Government to take over our health care system. People in the Fifth District of North Carolina tell me they're worried about the cost of health care and about the 15-person board that will be making decisions about their health care.

The President and Democrats said, "If you like your health care plan, you can keep it." But now we know this is not the case. The Independent Payment Advisory Board will pick and choose what should be cut from Medicare medical services. And they will do so without any accountability to the American people, to Congress, or to even the President.

As we prepare to vote on another bill that would repeal another part of this

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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